Alberta Heritage Foundation
for Medical Research

Health technology assessment on the Net: a guide to Internet sources of information

Sixth edition

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DEDICATION

We are very pleased to present this 6th update of our annual guide to Internet sources of information for health technology assessment (HTA). This guide was first developed at the suggestion of Dr. Matthew Spence, President and CEO of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR). Several years ago Dr. Spence asked for a guide to the key web sites for HTA information – one that might be helpful to people involved in health care throughout Alberta. Dr. Spence will be retiring from AHFMR this year and we would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his interest in HTA and his support for this initiative.

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Comments on this guide are welcome and can be sent to:
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PREFACE

It was recently brought to our attention that in previous editions we did not explicitly state our selection criteria for the web sites included in the guide. We apologize for this oversight. The truth is that we had no formal criteria (other than that these sites have been particularly useful to us in our HTA literature searches), but the sites we include usually meet most of the following criteria.

Selection Criteria

- developed by non-profit agencies (such as government funded organizations and universities) = **authority and reliability**
- updated regularly (with the exception of some sites which have been included for historical purposes) = **currency**
- contains valuable information for health technology assessment = **applicability**
- the bibliographic databases generally contain peer-reviewed studies; the health technology assessment and evidence-based health sources generally follow accepted methods for ensuring the comprehensiveness, transparency and reliability of the methods used in their systematic reviews = **validity**
- most of these sites are fairly easy to navigate and search = **usability**

The validity of our selections has not been formally tested. Readers should use their own critical appraisal skills to judge the quality of the information they find on these web sites.[1]

And speaking of critical appraisal, this edition of the guide includes a section of resources on how to critically assess the quality of health care studies. Other new sections of the guide list literature searching sources and distance learning courses in HTA for those interested in learning more about this field. This year we have also developed a ***"bookmarks"*** file to accompany the guide. The bookmarks can be downloaded from the AHFMR web site (http://www.ahfmr.ab.ca) to your computer to allow easy access to these sources when you need them.

[1] Many guides to assessing the quality of health information on the Internet are available, for example: the Canadian Health Network guide, *Using health information on the Internet*, available: http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/servlet/ ContentServer?cid=1042668266218&pagename=CHN-RCS/Page/ShellStaticContentPageTemplate&c=Page&lang=En

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INTRODUCTION

The foundation for any health technology assessment (HTA) is information. In fact, health technology assessment is the synthesis of many pieces of information from many different sources. The purpose of an HTA is to provide health care decision-makers with the evidence they need to make informed decisions concerning the introduction, allocation and cost-effective use of medical technologies.

Since its beginnings in the United States in the early 1970s, health technology assessment has expanded throughout the world. This growth has been accompanied by the development of many useful sources for HTA information. Some of these sources are produced by government and HTA agencies, while others are the products of centres involved in advancing evidence-based health care, such as the international Cochrane Collaboration.

Although a few of these resources were available in pre-Internet days, the Internet has had a tremendous impact on the amount of information available to us. However, as with all searches on the World Wide Web, the quantity of information can be overwhelming, and information from some web sites may be biased, out-of-date or of poor quality. The key to efficient searching is to know where reliable and relevant information can most often be found.

This guide focuses on Internet sites, particularly those that may be useful for people involved in health care in Alberta, Canada, but health technology assessments will also incorporate data from other sources. These may include specialized bibliographic databases relevant to the subject of the assessment; data from government and regulatory agencies; administrative databases; industry studies, and advice from experts in the field. Traditional print resources, such as medical textbooks, may also provide background information. These sources will vary depending on the subject and scope of the assessment.

Typically, a literature search for a technology assessment will begin with the major biomedical databases, such as PubMed, and with searches to determine if other HTA agencies have already assessed this technology. Such information is now easily accessible, via the Internet, at the sites listed in this guide.

FREE BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES

- ✓ **PubMed**: Includes MEDLINE, PreMedline, publisher supplied records and journal references from the old HealthSTAR database of HTA information. http://pubmed.gov
- ✓ **Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD):** Several databases are available here:
  - the **Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Database** of reports from INAHTA members and other HTA agencies,
  - the **NHS Economic Evaluation Database (NHS EED)** and the **Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE)** http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/crddatabases.htm
  - an **Ongoing Reviews Database** (http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/ongoing.htm), a register of ongoing systematic reviews in health care, is under development.
- ✓ **NLM Gateway:** Access to a number of US National Library of Medicine databases, including: Clinical Trials.gov, MEDLINE/PubMed, LOCATORplus, MEDLINEplus, DIRLINE, Meeting Abstracts, TOXLINE Special and HSRProj. http://gateway.nlm.nih.gov
- ✓ **AgeLine:** "Social gerontology" studies, including health research, on adults aged 50+. http://research.aarp.org/ageline/home.html
- ✓ **Cancer.gov:** Includes the PDQ® (Physician Data Query) database of cancer prevention, screening, genetics, diagnostic and treatment information, cancer clinical trials, statistics and patient guides. http://www.cancer.gov
- ✓ **The Campbell Library**: Systematic reviews of social, behavioral and educational interventions. http://www.campbellcollaboration.org
- ✓ **ERIC:** Database of the Educational Resources Information Center includes health-related educational information. http://eric.ed.gov/searchdb

COMMERCIAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES ($$$)

Many other databases are available through commercial vendors, such as Dialog (http://www.dialogweb.com), OVID Technologies (http://www.ovid.com), and others. Charges ($$$) are usually involved for searching these databases, or they may be available through your organization's library, or local university, public or health care libraries. Check with your librarian for information on access to these sources. Specialized databases, covering biomedical engineering, drug information, occupational health and safety, etc., are also available through these vendors.

- ✓ **BIOSIS (Biological Abstracts):** $$$ Covers the field of biological sciences, including medicine. Consider searching here for information on new research, pharmaceuticals and emerging technologies. http://www.biosis.org
- ✓ **CINAHL:** $$$ The Cumulated Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, CINAHL is also useful for coverage of the literature on occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and alternative medicine. http://www.cinahl.com
- ✓ **Clinical Evidence:** $$$ A clinical therapy resource of regularly updated evidence-based summaries, including a useful drug names table. http://www.clinicalevidence.com
- ✓ **The Cochrane Library:** $$$ Updated quarterly. The source for quality, systematic reviews of health care interventions; includes several databases (shown below). A subscription is required for full access (most health libraries have subscriptions; some countries have open access agreements with the publisher to make it freely available in their country) http://www.update-software.com/cochrane

  Those without a subscription can access the abstracts of the systematic reviews, free of charge, at: http://www.update-software.com/abstracts/mainindex.htm or can purchase the individual reviews online from the publisher.

  - *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* - access the full text of systematic reviews in all areas of health care, and study protocols for Cochrane Reviews currently underway.
  - *Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials* – references to over 400,000 clinical trials.
  - *Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE)* - reviews of the effects of healthcare interventions prepared by the UK Centre for Reviews and Dissemination.
  - *The NHS Economic Evaluation Database* - published economic evaluations of health care interventions.

- *Health Technology Assessment Database* – reports produced by INAHTA and other HTA organizations.
- *Cochrane Methodology Register* – references on how to conduct systematic reviews.
- *Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews* - the full text of systematic reviews prepared by The Cochrane Empirical Methodological Studies Methods Group.

✓ **EMBASE:** $$$ A database covering international literature in the fields of biomedical sciences and pharmacology http://www.embase.com

✓ **ISI Web of Knowledge (includes Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index, Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Biosis Previews, and Current Contents Connect)**: $$$ These databases from Thomson ISI® (formerly the Institute for Scientific Information) cover literature in the fields of science and technology, social sciences and humanities http://www.isiwebofknowledge.com/

✓ **PsycINFO:** $$$ Literature in the fields of psychology, psychiatry and behavioural sciences. Consider searching here for information on health-related quality of life, mental health therapies and programs, psychiatric drug assessments, etc. http://www.apa.org/psycinfo

CANADIAN HTA SITES

- **Agence d'évaluation des technologies et des modes d'intervention en santé (AETMIS):** Quebec's provincial HTA agency. AETMIS reports are usually first published in French, and later translated into English http://www.aetmis.gouv.qc.ca
- **Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR), Health Technology Assessment Unit:** The Alberta provincial HTA agency. The HTA Unit assessment reports and other publications are available online or print copies can be ordered here http://www.ahfmr.ab.ca/hta
- **British Columbia Office of Health Technology Assessment (BCOHTA):** British Columbia's provincial HTA agency was closed in 2002, but their assessment reports are still available on the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research web site http://www.chspr.ubc.ca
- **Calgary Health Technology Implementation Unit (CaHTIU):** An Alberta agency that links health research and applied HTA http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/htiu/project.html
- **Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment (CCOHTA):** Canada's national HTA agency publishes their assessments in both English and French, in print and on their web site http://www.ccohta.ca
- **Institute for Clinical and Evaluative Sciences in Ontario (ICES):** Ontario's health services and utilization research agency http://www.ices.on.ca
- **Institute for Work and Health (IWH):** A not-for-profit organization that publishes systematic reviews related to workplace injury prevention and treatments, such as for back pain http://www.iwh.on.ca
- **Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Medical Advisory Secretariat:** The Ontario government unit that evaluates health technologies. A web site for the agency is forthcoming.
- **Therapeutics Initiative:** Evidence-based drug assessments from the British Columbia Therapeutics Initiative http://www.ti.ubc.ca

INTERNATIONAL HTA SITES

We have not attempted to list all the international HTA agencies below. Information on most of these agencies and links to their web sites can be found through the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) web site. The sites below have additional features or information which may not be indexed in the **HTA Database**.

- ✓ **International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA):** INAHTA members include the main publicly funded HTA agencies worldwide. The site includes links to the member agencies (over 40 HTA agencies are currently members) http://www.inahta.org
- ✓ **Health Evidence Network (HEN):** A WHO site that provides assessments of public health interventions for health care decision-makers http://www.euro.who.int/HEN
- ✓ **Health Technology Assessment – international (HTAi)**: Formerly the International Society for Technology Assessment in Health Care (ISTAHC); HTAi is the new association for individuals and agencies involved in health technology assessment http://www.htai.org
- ✓ **EuroScan (European Information Network on New and Changing Health Technologies)**: Information on new and emerging health technologies. (Look under the Technology Reports section for a subset of the publications available to non-EuroScan members) http://www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/euroscan
- ✓ **Australia - Australian Efficacy Register of New Interventional Procedures – Surgical (ASERNIPS):** Assessments of surgical procedures and a "horizon scanning" (NET-S) database which tracks and assesses new and emerging surgical procedures http://www.surgeons.org/asernip-s
- ✓ **Australia - Centre for Clinical Effectiveness, Monash Institute of Health Services Research:** Full text of evidence-based assessments published by the Centre http://www.med.monash.edu.au/healthservices/cce
- ✓ **New Zealand - New Zealand Health Technology Assessment Clearing House for Health Outcomes and Health Technology Assessment (NZTA):** Includes the full text of their reports, presentations by HTA researchers, and useful guides to searching for HTA literature http://nzhta.chmeds.ac.nz
- ✓ **UK - West Midlands Health Technology Assessment Collaboration (WMHTAC):** Assessment reports from the University of Birmingham and the WMHTAC Handbook – a guide to undertaking rapid reviews http://www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/wmhtac/publications.htm

- ✓ **UK - Development and Evaluation Committee for the South West and South East (DEC):** The full text of DEC assessments from 1995 to 2000 and titles of pre-1995 reports (the service was discontinued in March 2000 but their reports are still available through this web site) http://www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk/rapidhta
- ✓ **UK - Health Evidence Bulletins – Wales:** Assessments of health care interventions and a useful project methodology guide for health technology assessment http://hebw.uwcm.ac.uk
- ✓ **UK - NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (formerly the Health Technology Board for Scotland):** Scotland's health technology assessment and health care quality improvement agency http://www.nhshealthquality.org/nhsqis
- ✓ **UK - National Horizon Scanning Centre:** Emerging health technology assessment briefs (look under the section titled Outputs to find these publications) http://www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/horizon
- ✓ **UK - National Coordinating Centre for Health Technology Assessment (NCCHTA):** The UK national office for HTA web site has a useful database of published and in progress research and the full text of their assessment reports http://www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk
- ✓ **UK - National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE):** Guidance and technology appraisal reports, and patient information for the UK NHS http://www.nice.org.uk
- ✓ **UK - STEER (Succinct and Timely Evaluated Evidence Reviews):** Rapid HTA reviews from the Wessex Institute http://www.wihrd.soton.ac.uk/projx/signpost/STEERS.htm
- ✓ **US - Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ):** Provides access to US federal government technology assessments and research on healthcare outcomes, quality, costs, utilization and access http://www.ahrq.gov
- ✓ **US - Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Technology Evaluation Center (TEC):** Assessment reports and information on assessments currently underway http://www.bcbs.com/tec
- ✓ **US – California Health Benefits Review Program (CHBRP):** A new agency which assesses medical technologies in relation to health insurance legislation and coverage in the state of California http://www.chbrp.org/
- ✓ **US - Congress. Office of Technology Assessment:** A full text archive to the publications of the now defunct OTA http://www.wws.princeton.edu/~ota

- ✓ **US - ECRI:** $$$An independent non-profit health technology assessment agency. ECRI assessments can be accessed with a subscription or purchased individually http://www.ecri.org
- ✓ **US - Hayes Inc.:** $$$ A company that specializes in HTA. Sample reports and a directory of Hayes' assessments are available free of charge, other publications are available to subscribers or can be purchased individually http://www.hayesinc.com
- ✓ **US - Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI):** Provides free access to their practice guidelines and health technology assessments http://www.icsi.org
- ✓ **US - Minnesota Health Technology Advisory Committee**: This US state HTA agency was closed in 2002, but their reports are still available on their web site http://www.health.state.mn.us/htac
- ✓ **US - Oregon Drug Effectiveness Review Project:** A collaborative project to assess the effectiveness of drugs within the same class http://www.ohsu.edu/drugeffectiveness/index.htm
- ✓ **US - RAND:** Research reports in many disciplines, including many relevant to health policy and health technology assessment http://www.rand.org

CLINICAL TRIALS

- ✓ **CCT Current Controlled Trials:** Clinical trials, protocols and other information, including the metaRegister of Controlled Trials (mRCT) - an international database combining multiple registries of ongoing controlled trials in healthcare http://www.controlled-trials.com
- ✓ **CenterWatch:** A clinical trials listing service and information source for the clinical trial industry http://www.centerwatch.com
- ✓ **ClinicalTrials.gov:** A database of clinical trials compiled by the US National Institutes of Health http://clinicaltrials.gov
- ✓ **International Register of Clinical Trials Registers**: Listings of clinical trials registries in different medical specialties http://www.trialscentral.org
- **National Cancer Institute of Canada Clinical Trials Group:** Clinical trials in cancer and supportive care led by the NCIC Clinical Trials Group http://www.ctg.queensu.ca
- ✓ **National Cancer Institute (US) PDQ® Clinical Trials database:** PDQ, part of the Cancer.gov web site, includes a database of ongoing and completed cancer trials, and information on cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment http://www.cancer.gov/clinical_trials
- ✓ **UK CCCR National Register of Cancer Trials:** A database of controlled trials in all types of cancers http://www.ctu.mrc.ac.uk/ukcccr

COMPLEMENTARY & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

- ✓ **The Alternative Medicine Homepage:** A portal for resources in this field http://www.pitt.edu/~cbw/altm.html
- ✓ **AMED (Allied and Complementary Database):** $$$ Produced by the British Library, this database covers allied and alternative medicine, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, chiropractic and herbal medicines http://www.bl.uk/services/information/amed.html
- ✓ **Bandolier Library - Complementary and Alternative Therapies**: A collection of best evidence on complementary and alternative health interventions http://www.jr2.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/booth/booths/altmed.html
- ✓ **Complementary and Alternative Medicine (New Zealand):** An evidence-based resource for complementary and alternative medicine http://www.cam.org.nz
- **Health Canada Natural Health Products Directorate:** Canada's governmental agency for the regulation of alternative and herbal medicines http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/nhpd-dpsn
- ✓ **National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine:** The US agency for the assessment of complementary medicine http://www.nccam.nih.gov
- ✓ **Quackwatch:** A non-profit service to combat health-related frauds, myths, fads, and fallacies http://www.quackwatch.org
- ✓ **Research Council for Complementary Medicine**: A UK research agency for complementary and alternative medicine http://www.rccm.org.uk

Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) & Critical Appraisal

- ✓ **Aggressive Research Intelligence Facility (ARIF):** Summaries of EBM questions and answers from health agencies in the West Midlands, UK http://www.bham.ac.uk/arif

- **Alberta Research Centre for Child Health Evidence (ARCHE):** Evidence summaries and systematic reviews on child health http://www.ualberta.ca/ARCHE/reviews.html#acyclovir_pub

- ✓ **ATTRACT:** UK service that provides rapid, evidence-based answers to clinical questions http://www.attract.wales.nhs.uk

- ✓ **Bandolier:** Evidence-based health care summaries, links to EBM sites, number needed to treat (NNT) calculators, and more http://www.jr2.ox.ac.uk/bandolier

- ✓ **BestBETs:** Brief appraisals of topics in clinical medicine http://www.bestbets.org

- **Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre:** Information on Cochrane review, field and methods groups and affiliated organizations in Canada, health care news, evidence-based medicine training and e-newsletters about Cochrane Collaboration initiatives http://cochrane.mcmaster.ca/default.asp

- ✓ **Effective Health Care Bulletins:** Bulletins based on systematic reviews of the clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and acceptability of health interventions http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/ehcb.htm

- **Effective Public Health Practice Project (EPHPP):** Systematic reviews in public health produced by the Public Health Research, Education and Development (PHRED) Program, in Ontario http://www.hamilton.ca/PHCS/EPHPP

- ✓ **Effectiveness Matters:** Briefs summarizing the results of high-quality systematic reviews of the effectiveness of health interventions http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/em.htm

- ✓ **James Lind Library:** An online library documenting the history of the assessment of medical interventions http://www.jameslindlibrary.org

- ✓ **Netting the Evidence: A ScHARR Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice on the Internet:** Tools, links and resources for critical appraisal and literature searching http://www.nettingtheevidence.org.uk

- **Occupational Therapy Evidence-Based Practice Research Group:** McMaster University's site for occupational therapy http://www-fhs.mcmaster.ca/rehab/ebp

- ✓ **OTseeker:** Abstracts of critically appraised systematic reviews and randomized controlled trials relevant to occupational therapy http://www.otseeker.com

- ✓ **PEDro:** Physiotherapy Evidence Database from the Centre for Evidence-Based Physiotherapy (CEBP) http://www.pedro.fhs.usyd.edu.au/index.html

- ✓ **TRIP (Turning Research into Practice) Database:** An evidence based site that allows searching across different types of evidence-based products. Non-subscribers are limited to 5 searches per week http://www.tripdatabase.com

- ✓ **Upstate Medical University Health Sciences Library – Evidence Based Health Care Resources:** A collection of international links to information about EBM http://www.upstate.edu/library/evidence/resources.shtml

Critical Appraisal:

- ✓ **Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine (Oxford Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine):** Resources on EBM for students, teachers and clinicians; including an EBM toolbox and levels of evidence and grades of recommendation http://www.cebm.net

- **Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine (University Health Network, Toronto):** Resources on how to practice and teach evidence-based medicine http://www.cebm.utoronto.ca

- ✓ **Centre for Health Information Quality (CHiQ):** How to check the quality of health information and how to ensure quality standards when producing health information http://www.hfht.org/chiq/

- ✓ **Critical Appraisal Skills Programme:** CASP provides online critical appraisal skills training, tools and resources http://www.phru.nhs.uk/casp/appraisa.htm

- **Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Workshop:** Coordinated by the McMaster University, Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, the longest running critical appraisal workshop in North America http://www.cche.net/ebcp/

- **Evidence-Based Medicine Tool Kit:** Online learning resource for evidence-based medicine /critical appraisal produced by the University of Alberta, Canada http://www.med.ualberta.ca/ebm/ebm.htm

- ✓ **How to Read a Paper:** A series of articles (also issued as a book) by Trisha Greenhalgh on appraising various types of studies in the medical literature http://bmj.com/collections/read.shtml

- **Putting Evidence Into Practice Workshop:** The University of Alberta & Capital Health Authority's Evidence-Based Practice Centre workshop, held in Edmonton, Alberta http://www.pep.ualberta.ca/program.html

- ✓ **Users' Guides to Evidence-Based Practice:** The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) users' guides to appraising the medical literature are available here http://www.cche.net/usersguides/main.asp

GOVERNMENT & RESEARCH INFORMATION

Canadian

- **Alberta Health and Wellness**: The Alberta government ministry of health web site, with ministry publications and links to Regional Health Authorities in the province http://www.health.gov.ab.ca
- **Cabot.ca**: A database of Canadian health services research literature provided by the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research http://cahspr.ca/cabot
- **Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF)**: Research on health policy and management, and the dissemination and utilization of research findings http://www.chsrf.ca
- **Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)**: CIHI compiles statistical data about the Canadian health care system, including diagnostic imaging, hospital-based procedures, and population health http://www.cihi.ca
- **Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)**: Canada's federal funding agency for health research http://www.cihr.ca
- **Health Canada**: The federal government ministry responsible for health care in Canada http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca (includes the **Drug Product Database- DPD** of licensed pharmaceuticals: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/index_drugs_dpd_e.html and the **Medical Devices Active Licence Listing (MDALL)** of licensed medical devices: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/tpd-dpt/mdlic_e.html)
- **Health Quality Council (HQC)**: Saskatchewan's agency for health system quality and research http://www.hqc.sk.ca
- **Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA)**: Alberta's health quality, utilization and outcomes research agency http://www.hqca.ca
- **Knowledge Utilization Database (KU-UC)**: Compiled by the CHSRF/CIHR Chair on Dissemination and Uptake of Research, at the Université Laval, this site indexes information on knowledge utilization, innovation, health policy and management http://kuuc.chair.ulaval.ca
- **Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP)**: Manitoba's health services and utilization research agency http://www.umanitoba.ca/centres/mchp

- **National Network of Libraries for Health:** Canada's new network to promote access to health information http://www.chla-absc.ca/nnlh/index.html
- **Statistics Canada:** Canada's national statistical agency. Charges for some data, but some reports, for example, on key health indicators, are available free of charge http://www.statcan.ca

United Kingdom

- ✓ **Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency:** The UK agency which regulates drugs and health technologies http://www.medical-devices.gov.uk
- ✓ **National Research Register:** A database of completed and ongoing UK health research http://www.update-software.com/National
- ✓ **Research Findings electronic Register (ReFeR):** Completed research studies funded by the UK Department of Health http://www.info.doh.gov.uk/doh/refr_web.nsf/Home?OpenForm

United States

- ✓ **Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects (CRISP):** A database of federally funded biomedical research http://crisp.cit.nih.gov
- ✓ **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid services:** Formerly the US Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) http://www.cms.gov
- ✓ **Food & Drug Administration (FDA):** The US federal regulatory agency for human and animal drugs, biologics, medical devices and consumer health products http://www.fda.gov
- ✓ **General Accounting Office (GAO):** Responsible for audits and evaluations of government policies and programs, including those related to healthcare http://www.gao.gov
- ✓ **National Institutes of Health (NIH):** The main site for US federally funded biomedical research http://www.nih.gov

HEALTH ECONOMICS

- **Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research:** Formerly the Canadian Health Economics Association http://www.cahspr.ca/
- ✓ **Centre for Health Economics, University of York:** Publications from the CHE http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/che
- **Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis (CHEPA), McMaster University:** Publications include many relevant to health economics and health technology assessment http://www.chepa.org
- ✓ **Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation:** An Australian centre for health economics and health services research http://www.chere.uts.edu.au/index.html
- ✓ **EconLit:** $$$ This database includes information on healthcare economics. Available through commercial database vendors http://www.econlit.org
- ✓ **Health Economic Evaluations Database (HEED):** $$$ A database of health economics literature compiled by the UK Office of Health Economics and the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Associations http://www.ohe-heed.com
- ✓ **Health Economics Information Resources:** A self-study course by Moira Napper http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nichsr/edu/healthecon
- ✓ **Health Economics Resource Centre, University of York**: Includes a guide to Health Economics Resources on the Internet http://www.york.ac.uk/res/herc/hercwelcome.htm
- **Institute of Health Economics:** Canadian research in health economics, policy and health-related quality of life http://www.ihe.ab.ca
- ✓ **National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER):** Abstracts of working papers from the NBER healthcare and health programs ($$$ apply for the full text of working papers) http://www.nber.org
- ✓ **NHS Economic Evaluation Database:** One of the three UK CRD databases. http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/nhsdhp.htm. Also available on the CRD web site is a guide to Information Resources in Health Economics http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/econ.htm
- **PEDE database (Paediatric Economic Database Evaluation):** Database of economic evaluations of child health http://pede.bioinfo.sickkids.on.ca/pede/index.jsp

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- **Alberta Medical Association Clinical Practice Guidelines:** AMA practice guidelines http://www.albertadoctors.org/bcm/ama/ama-website.nsf/AllDoc/3EA50DCC10AAD9F187256E1A0067025A?OpenDocument
- **British Columbia Medical Services Plan:** Guidelines and protocols from the BC Ministry of Health Services http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/msp/protoguides/index.html
- **Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care:** Task Force guidelines on screening and other preventive health measures http://www.ctfphc.org
- **CMA Infobase Clinical Practice Guidelines:** A database of Canadian guidelines compiled by the Canadian Medical Association http://mdm.ca/cpgsnew/cpgs/index.asp
- **College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta**: Standards for medical practice in Alberta http://www.cpsa.ab.ca/publicationsresources/policies.asp
- **Cancer Care Ontario Practice Guidelines Initiative (CCOPGI):** Guidelines and evidence summaries for cancer treatment http://www.cancercare.on.ca/access_PEBC.htm
- ✓ **HSTAT (Health Services/Technology Assessment Text):** Practice guidelines, consumer information and consensus statements from US government agencies http://text.nlm.nih.gov
- ✓ **National Comprehensive Cancer Network:** Clinical practice guidelines in oncology http://www.nccn.org
- ✓ **National Guideline Clearinghouse**: US evidence-based clinical practice guidelines http://www.guidelines.gov
- ✓ **National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) Guidelines Finder:** Database of UK national guidelines http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/guidelinesfinder
- ✓ **New Zealand Guidelines Group:** Evidence-based clinical guidelines and consumer guides http://www.nzgg.org.nz
- ✓ **PRODIGY (Practical Support for Clinical Governance):** UK clinical guidance and patient information http://www.prodigy.nhs.uk/clinicalguidance
- **Rehabilitation Guidelines**: Evidence-based rehabilitation guidelines compiled by the University of Ottawa http://www.health.uottawa.ca/EBCpg/english

- ✓ **Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN):** Scottish guidelines and guideline development methods http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sign/index.html
- ✓ **US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF):** Systematic reviews of preventive health services http://www.ahcpr.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm

QUALITY OF LIFE

- ✓ **Mapi Research Institute:** Information on health related quality of life, including the QOLID (Quality of Life Instruments Database) http://www.mapi-research-inst.com/index02.htm
- ✓ **Health Related Quality of Life**: Quality of life information compiled by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion http://www.cdc.gov/hrqol
- ✓ **International Society for Quality of Life Research (ISOQOL):** Information on the association's conferences, journal, and an annotated bibliography of key articles on health related quality of life http://www.isoqol.org

FURTHER INFORMATION

- ✓ **Cochrane Reviewers' Handbook:** This handbook is the official guide for conducting Cochrane systematic reviews
  http://www.cochrane.org/resources/handbook/index.htm
- ✓ **HTA Handbook:** A guide to undertaking a health technology assessment produced by the Danish Centre for Evaluation and Health Technology Assessment (DACEHTA)
  http://sst.dk/Applikationer/cemtv/publikationer/docs/Metodehaandbog/MethodologyHandbook180601.pdf
- ✓ **TA 101: Introduction to Health Care Technology Assessment:** by Cliff Goodman. An overview of HTA, including the methods and steps involved in conducting an assessment
  http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nichsr/ta101/ta101_c1.htm
- ✓ **UK West Midlands Development and Evaluation Service Handbook:** A guide to writing a rapid review
  http://www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/wmhtac/pdf/wmhandbook.pdf
- ✓ **Undertaking Systematic Reviews of Research on Effectiveness**: The UK CRD's guide to commissioning and conducting systematic reviews.
  http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/report4.htm

Listservs

Listservs can be a useful way to learn of new research or share questions and discussions with colleagues. Follow the instructions below to sign up for these HTA-related listservs.

- ✓ **Cochrane Collaboration Electronic Newsletter (ccinfo-list):**
  http://mailman.mcmaster.ca/mailman/listinfo/ccinfo-list
- ✓ **Evidence-Based Health:** http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/EVIDENCE-BASED-HEALTH.html
- ✓ **International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assesment (INAHTA)** (for INAHTA members only)
  send e-mail to: listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
  message: SUBSCRIBE INAHTA firstname lastname
  (do not attach a signature)

- ✓ **SPIG-IR listserv (a listserv for those interested in HTA information sources and services):**
  send e-mail to: listproc@stonebow.otago.ac.nz
  Leave the subject line and the signature blank and type:
  SUBSCRIBE SPIG-IR firstname lastname
  (If you have any problems signing up contact the list administrator: susan.bidwell@chmeds.ac.nz)

Literature Searching Guides

- ✓ **Finding Studies for Systematic Reviews: A Checklist for Researchers:** A guide to systematic literature searching produced by the UK CRD
  http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/crd/revs.htm
- ✓ **NZHTA Search Protocol:** by Susan Bidwell. Outlines the standard sources used for New Zealand's HTA projects, including the COSI protocol (Core, Standard & Ideal searches)
  http://nzhta.chmeds.ac.nz/nzhtainfo/protocol.htm
- ✓ **Etext on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Information Resources:** An electronic textbook, written by HTA researchers and librarians from around the world. This e-text provides in-depth coverage of methods and sources used in searching for HTA information http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nichsr/ehta/
- **I+I** **Evidence-based Resource Sheets: for health professionals and consumers:** The Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre (CCN/C), the Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment (CCOHTA), and the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care (CTFPHC) collaboratively produce these evidence-based resource sheets for three audiences - health professionals, consumers, and health policy planners
  http://www.ctfphc.org/Resource%20sheets/resource_sheets.htm

Open Access (=Free) Electronic Journals

Many journal publishers now make their journals available on the Internet. A subscription is required for some titles, but some publishers now offer free access to these e-journals. The following are just a sampling of web sites that link to collections of freely available electronic journals (check the web site of the journal's publisher if you do not find the title you need through the sources below).

- ✓ BioMed Central: http://www.biomedcentral.com
- ✓ Directory of Open Access Journals: http://www.doaj.org/
- ✓ Free Medical Journals.com: http://www.freemedicaljournals.com

- ✓ Hardin MD – Free Medical Journals Search: http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin/md/ej.html
- ✓ Public Library of Science: http://www.plos.org
- ✓ PubMedCentral: http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov

Distance learning in HTA

- ✓ **Applied Health Technology Assessment:** An introductory course for health care decision makers offered by Hayes Inc. http://www.hayesinc.com

- **Health Technology Assessment: Decision-Making for Health:** A 12 week distance learning course offered by the Quebec HTA agency, AETMIS. For information contact Robert Asfazadour, e-mail: elearning@aetmis.gouv.qc.ca or phone: (514) 873-9064.

- ✓ **The Ulysses Project: International Master's Program in Health Technology Assessment and Management:** Not exactly distance learning – students register at one of four participating universities (in Rome, Barcelona, Ottawa or Montreal), and take courses at these centres through the course of the program http://www.hta-master.com